



FALL THE NET 2010

LINCOLN BUSINESS WATCH



LINCOLN'S ALARM REGISTRATION ORDINANCE

Across the nation, the growth of alarm system ownership has resulted in a tremendous amount of false alarms. The response to false alarms has created an additional burden on our law enforcement agencies. Nationwide, approximately 99% or more of all the burglar alarms police respond on are false. The city wants to substantially reduce the number of false alarms so an alarm registration ordinance has been implemented. All persons who use alarm systems in their homes, buildings or any other structure they own, lease, or contract for, must provide their name and information to the City of Lincoln. There is a fee associated with the registration that offsets the city's administrative costs of the program: Business alarm fee is \$100, or \$70 if a commercial alarm company is used; Residential alarm fee is \$60, or \$40 if a commercial alarm company is used. After the initial registration this year, all alarm businesses and users must renew their application in January of each even numbered year. Renewal fees are the same amount as the initial permit. Failure to register your alarm could result in a fine. You can register on-line at: www.lincoln.ne.gov, or at: www.crywolf.us/lincolne.

The City of Lincoln's alarm registration ordinance helps law enforcement by providing current contact information when alarms occur and helps reduce the number of false alarms officers are called to answer, leaving them available to respond to other crimes.

BURGLARIES PERSIST:

Most recently there was a string of burglaries to several churches. Plus, we continue to have residents victimized because they leave their overhead garage doors open and homes unsecured. Though the reports have persisted we have had some success in arresting the burglars. After raising public awareness with the help of local media, a citizen who lives near to a neighborhood church called the police when he heard suspicious noises. Three young men were arrested after they were found hiding in a nearby back yard. Similarly an open garage burglary was cleared after the victim alerted several second hand stores that his golf clubs had been stolen. The thief was nabbed when he tried to sell the clubs at a store. Being aware and calling the police when you have suspicions is obviously the answer!

CRIMESTOPPERS! UPDATE

Crimestoppers continues to be a very successful program for Lincoln and Lancaster County. From January to the beginning of September 2010, over 1,200 Crimestoppers tips have been received, resulting in over 200 cleared cases and \$7000 in reward money paid out. This is already well past the 136 cases cleared for the entire year in 2009. This is certainly due to both the success of the new lincolncrimestoppers.com website, and the media partnership the Lincoln Police has with 10/11 news, Three Eagles Communication, and the Broadcast House. Crimestoppers remains an easy way to leave an anonymous tip about crime information, and possibly earn a reward. Tips can be called in to 475-3600, can be left online at lincolncrimestoppers.com, or they can even be texted in. Just text LNK402 and your tip, and send it to CRIMES. Keep those tips coming!

SHORT CHANGING aka Quick Change

There have been several recent reports of scams at local retail businesses involving a person coming in as a customer to make a small purchase. The scammer will most often use a \$50 bill to buy an item that is less than a dollar in value. Once they receive the change from their \$50 bill the scammer will create some confusion by asking the employee for other variations of denominations they want. As the scammer continues to talk and trade bills back and forth with the employee they are usually able to leave the business with more money than they originally handed over for the supposed purchase. The employee ends up with a shorted cash drawer at the end of their shift. The following link shows the scam in a more simplified form as told by Penn Jillette, "Penn & Teller Money Trick": <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8lsSPshxJ4&feature=related> (minor crude language but good information).

Employees should be taught to close their cash drawer as soon as the initial sale is completed and treat any request for exchanging cash as new transaction. If there is confusion, stop the transaction right away, close the cash drawer and ask for a supervisor's help.

Parking Lot Safety

While we're out visiting and working at businesses in town, a few safety tips should be kept in mind that apply to both customers and employees.

- When arriving, try to park in a well lit, well travelled area, and remember to consider that these conditions may change by the time you're leaving.
- Be on the lookout for suspicious activity. If you see someone loitering by your vehicle, don't go out alone. Alert the police to all suspicious activity.
- Have your car keys ready as you go to your vehicle, and check inside before you get in. If you notice anything unusual, go back inside and get assistance.
- Keep your vehicle locked, with no valuables in view.
- Secure purses and bags under an arm.
- If possible, come and go from the business with a friend or coworker.
- Trust your instincts!

NEW COLORS OF LPD

Uniforms:

The Lincoln Police Department is in the process of issuing new uniforms. LPD apparel will now be a navy blue shirt with police patches on both shoulders and navy blue trousers that do not have a light blue stripe on the outer leg seam. At right is a photo of the new uniform look compared to the previous. There will be a gradual changeover in the look as new shirts and trousers are ordered on an "as needed to replace" basis.



Cruisers:

The Lincoln Police Department cruisers also acquired a graphics makeover with new black and white logos. The new designs were made in conjunction with a University of Nebraska graphics design class. The design incorporates Lincoln Police lettering with an LPD badge facsimile on the front fender.



New Dodge Charger cruiser



New Ford Escape Hybrid cruiser

Thefts Turn Into Frauds

Last year through November there were 1,147 reports of frauds.

This year through November there have been 1,863 fraud reports- a 62.4% increase.

Thefts from the workplace have recently been turning into a large number of frauds taking place. Employees at businesses, hospitals, schools, etc. have had their purses or wallets stolen. The credit cards are then taken and used by the thief to make purchases at a variety of retail stores. Typically the credit cards are being used within minutes of the theft so a lot of damage can be done before the victim even realizes their property has been stolen. The best way to prevent this from happening is to make sure your belongings are secure. Instead of leaving a purse or wallet on a shelf, a desk top or behind a counter lock it into a file drawer, cupboard, closet or locker.

If you realize your credit cards or check book are missing call your bank right away to put a stop on any transactions they could be used for. If you discover that your credit card, debit card or check book have been used fraudulently call your bank and report it to the police department as soon as possible. Additionally, if your business handles transactions with credit or debit cards follow your protocol as best is possible to ensure the card is being used by an authorized person.

Crime information in your neighborhood:

To get a report directly generated to your e-mail address go to:

www.CrimeMapping.com

- ♦ Investigate crime activity by type, location or time period.
- ♦ View crime activity around a home address, school or business.
- ♦ Capture a snapshot of activity and create a report for more detailed information.

CrimeMapping.com will aid you in staying informed about the kinds of police related activity going on in your neighborhood. By signing up for this service you will automatically receive updates that are directly correlated to the daily reports Lincoln Police are taking. All you'll need to do is check your e-mail.